WEATHER A-16

Cloudy

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Where the beefalo roam

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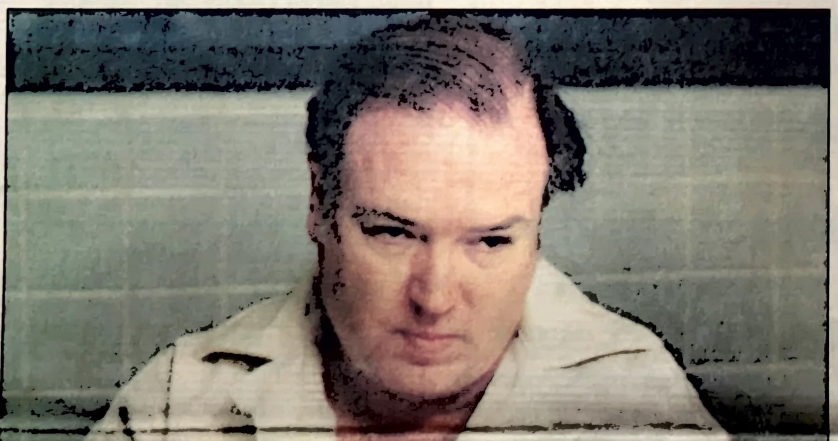
SUNDAY February 24, 1991 *Serving the Mississippi Gulf Coast for 106 Years* Vol. 107, No. 146 **$1.25**

THE SUN HERALD

LAND WAR BEGINS

Nix according to Nix



Bush OKs all-out attack after Iraq snubs deadline

FROM WIRE REPORTS

■ DHAHRAN, Saudi Arabia — Allied forces struck Iraqi troops before dawn today in a long-awaited ground offensive that Arab and British sources said included massive land assaults into Kuwait and Iraq.

The all-out attack announced by President Bush as the "final phase" of the liberation of Kuwait came after Saddam Hussein ignored a White House ultimatum to pull his army out of the emirate.

The ground offensive, following weeks of practice by allied armored, air and amphibious forces, marked the start of the biggest U.S. ground engagement since Vietnam and America's first desert land war since World War II.

Bush briefly addressed the nation Saturday night to announce that he had ordered the military to use "all forces available, including ground forces, to eject the Iraqi army from Kuwait."

Britain's domestic news agency, Press Association, reported that the allied forces were engaged in a complicated series of diversionary tactics and feigned assaults to

UPDATE, DAY 39

- Thousands of U.S. troops, tanks and artillery pieces pour across the Saudi Arabia border into Kuwait in what President Bush calls the 'final phase' in the war to drive Iraq from Kuwait.
- In Baghdad's first reaction to the start of a ground war, a spokesman for Iraq's embassy to the

VERN WILLIAMS/SUN HERALD GRAPHICS EDITOR

Angola inmate Kirksey McCord Nix Jr. was interviewed by Sun Herald Staff Writer Anita Lee on Feb. 14.

Sherry case looms over Angola inmate

By ANITA LEE
STAFF WRITER

■ Louisiana inmate Kirksey McCord Nix Jr. possesses the mind of a crafty lawyer coupled with the instincts of a criminal.

Today, the 47-year-old son of Oklahoma lawyers sits in a cell at the Harrison County Detention Center on the Industrial Seaway. He faces four drug charges on the Coast, but it is an accusation that he ordered the murders of Biloxians Vincent and Margaret Sherry that casts his story in the spotlight.

Vincent, a Circuit Court judge, and Margaret, a former Biloxi councilwoman and mayoral candidate, were gunned down in their north Biloxi home on Sept. 14, 1987.

Nix, who has spent the past 20 years in the Louisiana State Prison at Angola serving a murder sentence, was fingered as a conspirator in the Sherry murders in August 1989. Nix's former Angola comrade, murderer Bobby Joe Fabian, claimed that Nix and other inmates plotted Vincent Sherry's murder because they believed that he had stolen up to $500,000 in proceeds from a scam that the prisoners were running. The scam preyed on homosexuals who sent money orders to inmates who were posing as potential lovers.

Fabian also said that Nix's former attorney and friend, Biloxi lawyer Pete Halat, participated in the scam and murder plot. Halat, now mayor of Biloxi, adamantly denies any involvement in the scam or murders. Halat and Vincent Sherry were law partners and close friends.

Nix also denies any link to the murders. He arranged a private polygraph test given to him Jan. 31 at Angola. The examiner, a Baton Rouge, La., polygrapher, subsequently said that he believed Nix answered truthfully when he said he did not know who murdered the Sherrys and did not help plan the murders.

On Feb. 14, The Sun Herald interviewed Nix at Angola about his criminal past; his relationship with Halat, his friendship with Mike Gillich Jr., a Biloxi strip joint owner; and the Sherry murders. Excerpts of the interview appear on Page A-12.

Jazz fest lines up Marsalis, Connick, Davis, King

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

■ NEW ORLEANS — Wynton Marsalis, Harry Connick Jr., Miles Davis and B.B. King headline the hundreds of musicians coming to play at this spring's New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival.

The schedule includes seven all-day programs on the infield of the Fair Grounds horse race track and 13 evening concerts around the city.

The Wynton Marsalis Quartet, Marsalis' father, Ellis, and a band made up of top local players leads off the evening schedule with a tribute to Louis Armstrong on April 26.

Davis and King perform the following night in the Municipal Auditorium at the same time that Connick and the Harry Connick Jr. Orchestra start the first of two performances in the Saenger Theater. Connick performs again April 28.

Which to attend is only one of many choices facing music lovers, since 12 stages are set up at the Fair Grounds and headline acts often are scheduled at the same time.

Performers at the Fair Grounds will include Thomas, King, Los Lobos, Charmaine Neville, Dr. John, Pete Fountain, C.J. Chenier, Kate & Anna McGarrigle, the Meters, and the Neville Brothers.

Food tents and large contemporary and folk crafts shows also are set up at the Fair Grounds April 26-28 and May 2-4.

The four-day weekend is new. "We hope this day will recapture the laid-back atmosphere of the Jazz Festival's early years," said Producer-Director Quint Davis.

■ To get your own J-fest schedule, send a legal-size, self-addressed and stamped envelope to New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival, P.O. Box 53407, New Orleans, LA, 70153-3407.

Britain's domestic news agency, Press Association, reported that the allied forces were engaged in a complicated series of diversionary tactics and feigned assaults to deceive Iraqi commanders.

The report said the U.S. 2nd Marine Division and 18th Airborne Corps stormed over the border into eastern Kuwait. To the west, U.S. Army troops moved into Iraq in a flanking operation, Press Association reported.

Arab military sources in Riyadh, reached by telephone from Bahrain, said the coalition forces pushed in three assaults from land and sea into Kuwait and one from Saudi Arabia into Iraq.

U.S. military officials declined to give any details of the assault, saying it would aid the enemy. The Pentagon canceled its briefings, a staple of news on the war. Defense Secretary Dick Cheney said the briefings would be suspended "for the time being."

The Kuwait News Agency quoted an Arab military source as saying allied forces retook Failaka island, which dominates the entrance to Kuwait harbor. There was no independent confirmation. The agency, run by the exiled Kuwaiti government, said allied forces destroyed Iraqi tanks and took prisoner from 500 to 1,000 Iraqi troops.

Arab military sources in Riyadh said some 250 Iraqis had surrendered in the first hour of the attack, which began at 4 a.m. local time. They gave no details.

a ground war, a spokesman for Iraq's embassy to the United Nations says his country would never surrender and 'a lot of Americans will die also.'

INSIDE

- Mapping the war, **A-2**
- Terror in Kuwait City, **A-2**
- U.S. battle doctrine, **A-12**
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ALSO INSIDE

MORE TRIBUTES

■ Inside today's paper you'll find two more pages of photographs and biographical information for servicemen and women in the Persian Gulf.

Tributes are on Pages B-8 and B-9

ALLIES STORM KUWAIT

1. U.S. soldiers punched at least eight miles into Kuwait in a northward thrust near the town of Wafra.
2. A second thrust reached eastward at least nine miles into Kuwait toward the Umm Qadir oil field.
3. U.S. Harrier jump-jets and other Marine and Navy bombers pounded armor, artillery and anti-aircraft guns on the Kuwaiti islands of Faylakah and Bubiyan.

All along the northern Saudi border, U.S. army tanks, Bradley Fighting Vehicles and armored personnel carriers pushed through clearings in tall sand berms. Sporadic fighting flared, including one battle in which U.S. Marines took 200 prisoners.

SUN HERALD/WIRE SERVICES GRAPHIC

FLASH POINT PERSIAN GULF

DEADLINE PASSES; GROUND WAR BEGINS

President Bush announced late Saturday night that a massive ground assault had begun to oust half-a-million Iraqi troops from Kuwait. General Schwarzkopf was given the authority to launch the offensive after extensive consultations with coalition leaders.

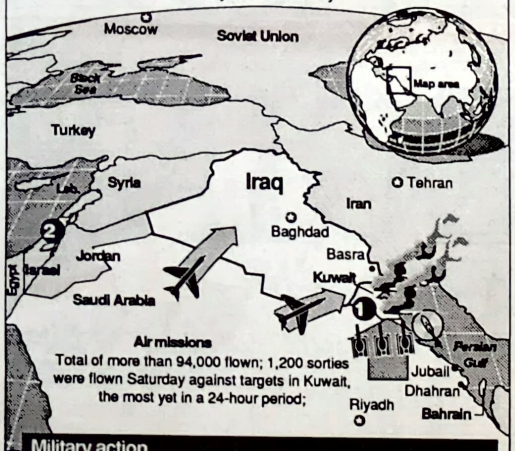
Kuwait

1 190 oil wells now ablaze; 25 percent of Kuwait covered with thick smoke; military says Iraqi troops are killing Kuwait City civilians at random

Thousands of allied troops, tanks and artillery poured across the Saudi border; unconfirmed reports of heavy helicopter activity over Kuwait City

Israel

2 Iraq fires Scud missile at Israel minutes before U.S. imposed deadline passes. No injuries reported.



Air missions
Total of more than 94,000 flown; 1,200 sorties were flown Saturday against targets in Kuwait, the most yet in a 24-hour period;

Military action

■ Minesweepers move closer to Kuwaiti beaches clearing the way for Marine amphibious assault

■ Reporters in the battlefield say U.S. troops have set up a helicopter refueling base inside Iraq

■ In an early morning raid, Marines took 143 Iraqi POWs for a war total of 3,550

■ U.S. military says Iraq has lost: 1,685 tanks, 925 armored personnel carriers and 1,485 artillery

Allied losses

United States
Deaths: 24
MIAs: 30
POWs: 9
Planes lost: 23

Allied forces
Deaths: 19
MIAs: 21
POWs: 4
Planes lost: 9

Iraqi losses

Iraq
Deaths: No exact casualty figures available. Iraqi official says 20,000 killed, 60,000 wounded in first 26 days of war. No civilian, military breakdown.
POWs: More than 3,550*
Planes lost: 135*
*From allied sources

SOURCE: News reports, pool reports subject to review by military censors

KNIGHT-RIDDER GRAPHICS NETWORK

Southern Kuwait fires 'what hell must look like'

By EDITH M. LEDERER
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

■ IN CENTRAL SAUDI ARABIA — Above southern Iraq, allied fighter pilots race over a darkened landscape.

But nearing Kuwait, the horizon is ablaze from a growing number of oil well fires set by Saddam Hussein's troops, says a commander from the U.S. 4th Tactical Fighter Wing (Provisional).

"Southern Kuwait looks like what hell must look like," said Col. Hal Hornburg, 45, of Dallas. "If Saddam Hussein says he has not set that country on fire and torched it off, don't be misled. He has."

In southern Iraq, however, there are no lights on the ground, in contrast to the first nights of the war when cities were illuminated and pilots could see the headlights of vehicles.

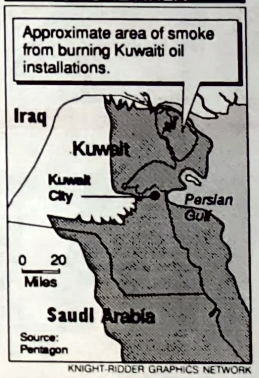
"The only way we can tell where we are now (over Iraq) is by looking at our instruments," Hornburg said.

Hornburg said allied bombers had not touched off the fires.

"I attribute 100 percent of them to (Saddam's forces) torching off those oil wells," he said. "You could see it from 100 miles away.

"I looked at the instruments to see if we were closer to the border than I thought we were. It was just such an immense fire it appeared to be 30 miles ahead instead of 100."

SMOKE AREA



KNIGHT-RIDDER GRAPHICS NETWORK

Hornburg said the fires have had no effect on allied bombers hitting their targets, because their radar- and infrared-guided bombs can pierce dense smoke.

In recent weeks, squadrons from this base have been concentrating on Iraqi tanks, armor and Republican Guard positions, and Hornburg said they are having "excellent success."

"We do find that he puts his armor in clusters. Once we find a cluster, it's not very difficult with precision-guided munitions to do the job," he said.

Iraqis systematically killing thousands in Kuwait City, U.S. says

By RICHARD PYLE
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

■ RIYADH, Saudi Arabia — Iraq began a new campaign of terror in Kuwait City on Saturday, killing civilians at random, U.S. military officials said.

From 2,000 to 10,000 Kuwaitis had

NEWSMAKERS

Kansas beauty takes Miss USA tiara home

McCarty

■ Home state favorite Kelli McCarty, a college student and aerobics instructor, was crowned Miss USA 1991 in a pageant marred by lawsuits filed by three former winners.

McCarty, 21, of Liberal in southwest Kansas, delighted the partisan crowd when she rolled her eyes in disbelief before taking her coronation walk at the Century II convention center in Wichita on Friday night.

Charlotte Ray, 24, of Voorhees, N.J., was first runner-up. Diane Schock, 25, of Fontana, Calif., was second runner-up.

The crowning of the new Miss USA ended the reign of Carole Gist of Detroit, who has filed an $18 million lawsuit against the pageant and its organizers. Gist made her first Miss USA appearance of this year to crown McCarty.

Gist, the first black Miss USA, accuses the pageant and its officials in her lawsuit of discrimination, poor working conditions and not delivering all of the prizes promised her.

Meanwhile, $10 million lawsuits on behalf of Miss USA 1989 Gretchen Polhemus and Miss USA 1988 Courtney Gibbs were filed Friday in U.S. District Court in Detroit, said attorney Gregory Reed, who also represents Gist.

Those lawsuits accuse Miss Universe Inc., producer of the Miss USA pageant, of misrepresentation, fraud, unfair labor practices, and physical and mental abuse.

SORRY, BUT HE HAS A BETTER OFFER

■ Famous ragtime pianist Eubie Blake, much deceased these past eight years, was recently asked to attend the Sony Corp.'s Innovators Award Program this April in New York where he would receive the "first Legendary Innovator Award."

In the two-page invitation, Sony said his attendance would be "a tremendously uplifting experience." According to New York magazine, Blake's executor, Elliot Hoffman, wrote back, "He will not be able to join (you). . . . Instead, he would want you to know that he is performing with Louis Armstrong . . . Jimi Hendrix and Johann Sebastian Bach."

LABELLE'S CHURCH EXCUSES 'LADY MARMALADE'

LaBelle

■ Patti LaBelle never misses a chance to visit the Baptist church in her old neighborhood, except for the time she recorded a hit song that — unbeknownst to her, she says — was about a prostitute.

The 45-year-old singer recounted how, as a timid child, she made a successful tryout for the church choir at Beulah Baptist Church in Philadelphia. She goes back to the church on Sunday mornings whenever she can.

"Your roots are what make you and my roots are there," LaBelle said in the March issue of Applause, the PBS television magazine. "I have to see my friends, my people. I have to go there and just be Patti."

LaBelle lives just a few miles away in Wynnewood, Pa.

LaBelle said she didn't know at first that her 1970s hit song "Lady Marmalade" was about a prostitute. When she found out, "suddenly, I felt all alone, that I'd done something wrong to the church," she said. "It took courage and faith to go back."

She was welcomed. "Love is what's it's all about," she said.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAYS

■ Actor Abe Vigoda is 70; movie composer Michel Legrand is 59; opera singer Renata Scotto is 56; actor James Farentino is 53; actor Barry Bostwick is 46.

ALSO OF NOTE . . .

Planes lost: 9

*From allied sources

SOURCE: News reports, pool reports subject to review by military censors

KNIGHT-RIDDER GRAPHICS NETWORK

WAR NOTES

U.S. ex-defense secretary Weinberger says Moscow still arming Iraq

■ LONDON — Former U.S. Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger said Saturday that the Soviet Union is still supplying arms to Iraq and suggested that Soviet military advisers have remained in Iraq.

The Soviets have said they cut all arms shipments to Iraq as part of the worldwide U.N. embargo on trade with Baghdad after the Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait. Moscow also says Soviet military advisers have left.

"They (the Soviets) have been behaving in a way which demonstrates their principal goal is to help Iraq and end up as the principal friend of the radical Arab states," Weinberger said in a British Broadcasting Corp. television interview.

Of Soviet arms supplies, Weinberger said without elaboration, "The information I have been given is that is still happening."

Baghdad is formerly the Soviet Union's biggest arms client in the Middle East, and has done business with the Soviet military for nearly 30 years.

Roughly 90 percent of Iraq's ground weapons are of Soviet design, according to Henry Dodds, editor of Jane's Soviet Intelligence Review.

Sea-based Marine bombers pick up pace

■ ABOARD THE USS NASSAU IN THE NORTHERN PERSIAN GULF — Sea-based Marine bombers on Saturday picked up the pace of their sorties against targets on Kuwaiti islands as they prepared battlefields for a ground war. The bombers also added deadly Rockeye bombs to the arsenal of weapons they were directing against armor, artillery and antiaircraft guns on the islands. Rockeye bombs explode in the air and release a spray of powerful small bombs capable of piercing some armor.

Allies: Saddam made deployment blunder

■ A U.S. AIRBASE IN CENTRAL SAUDI ARABIA — Allied officers say their air power was able to pummel Iraqi troops to the point of withdrawal because Saddam Hussein made a strategic and tactical blunder: He concentrated all his forces along the border in southern Iraq and Kuwait. "He, in fact, set them up for the kill," said Col. Tom Lennon, commander of the 48th Tactical Fighter Wing (Provisional), whose F-111F fighter-bombers are credited with destroying more than 750 Iraqi tanks and armored vehicles and 234 hardened aircraft shelters. "Had those forces been dispersed across the country instead of being concentrated in one area, it would have made the air war more difficult," Lennon said.

Iraq shows destroyed power stations

■ BAGHDAD, Iraq — The blackout of Baghdad began with gossamer falling from the sky and ended with the thunder of missiles, power officials said Saturday. The result, they said, left this city of some 4 million people without electricity and facing at least three years of reconstruction to repair a few moments of damage. Iraqi officials took reporters on a tour of damaged Baghdad power stations Saturday for the first time since war broke out Jan. 17. Earlier security concerns had put such plants off limits.

U.S. pilots send Saddam a warning

■ A U.S. AIR BASE IN CENTRAL SAUDI ARABIA — "Saddam! Saddam! This is the United States. On guard. You're out of time."

That radio message went out at the stroke of 8 p.m. Saturday to hundreds of allied pilots returning from missions over Iraq and Kuwait as President Bush's deadline for Iraqi capitulation in the Persian Gulf War passed unheeded.

"We just laughed. We thought it was hilarious," said Capt. Bill Schaal, 32, of Peoria, Ill., who heard the message as his F-15E fighter-bomber crossed into Saudi Arabia after knocking out two Scud missiles in western Iraq with laser-guided bombs.

"I was hoping (Saddam Hussein would) make a decision, but I guess he hasn't. That's the way it goes," Schaal said.

None of the pilots interviewed knew the identity of the male voice who made the broadcast.

—FROM WIRE REPORTS

■ RIYADH, Saudi Arabia — Iraq began a new campaign of terror in Kuwait City on Saturday, killing civilians at random, U.S. military officials said.

The Pentagon said from 2,000 to 10,000 Kuwaitis had been victims of "atrocities" in recent days.

"There is a systematic campaign of executions of people they've tortured before . . . they are grabbing people and summarily executing them," said Marine Brig. Gen. Richard Neal, U.S. command chief spokesman.

He said information from the Kuwaiti resistance and other intelligence reports showed the killings had been going on for 24 to 48 hours.

Asked whether he believed reports from the Kuwaiti resistance, which has provided previous accounts of Iraqi atrocities that could not be independently verified, Neal said: "We are very comfortable with the statement I have just made."

At a Pentagon briefing Saturday, Navy Adm. Mike McConnell said 100,000 Kuwaiti civilians had been detained since the invasion.

The general said the executions in Kuwait City had been occurring for some time but had "increased in tempo" in the past two days.

Meanwhile, Solidarity International for Kuwait, an international group of Kuwaiti exiles and supporters, claimed it had information from inside Kuwait that the situation was "extremely bad because of the brutal treatment of the Kuwaiti citizens by the Iraqi occupation forces."

From 2,000 to 10,000 Kuwaitis had been victims of 'atrocities' in recent days.

The Pentagon

It said that any Kuwaiti between 15 and 55 found in the streets is seized, blindfolded and sent off to Iraq as a prisoner of war. It also claimed that Iraqi jailers had been ordered by Baghdad to execute all the detainees remaining in Kuwaiti jails — about 65 people.

The group said Kuwaiti streets were deserted following random arrests, and that the bodies of eight young women and eight young men had been found.

There was no way to verify the group's claims.

Lucky Marines escape blasting of vehicle

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

■ NEAR KUWAIT BORDER — With red pen and shaky hand, Marine Lance Cpl. Robert Grady of Madison, N.C., inscribed a new nickname on his battle helmet: "Lucky as Hell."

His partner, Lance Cpl. William Noland of Memphis, Tenn., also scrawled a new nickname on his camouflaged Kevlar headgear: "Lucky as Hell II."

The two Marines miraculously escaped unharmed Thursday when their humvee vehicle was destroyed by an Iraqi mortar round at the beginning of the fiercest battle thus far involving the 2nd Marine Division.

"Everybody says the Iraqis are weak, but from where I was sitting they don't look that weak," said Grady, 21.

"I was totally amazed we weren't killed," Noland, 25, said. "It was a scary thing."

The two Marines were in a light armoured infantry convoy running reconnaissance five miles north of a Saudi defensive berm when the Iraqis began raining mortar shells on them.

"The Iraqis aren't very accurate. It was a lucky shot (that hit us), but it was a good shot," said Grady, who was riding shotgun while Noland drove the vehicle. "We saw mortar rounds exploding in front of us, one, two, three.

"The fourth round nailed the Hummer in the rear. There was a loud boom, and we were thrown up against the windshield. Then we shoved out and were running for cover."

The mortar destroyed four of six Stinger anti-aircraft missiles in the back of the humvee and damaged the other two. Each of the shoulder-launched missiles carries the explosive power of a half-pound of TNT.

Neither man seemed fazed by their first taste of combat. Instead, they complained that they had not received another vehicle so they could rejoin their battalion.

They were most upset at losing personal items when the humvee was hit.

"I lost my dental floss, a snapshot of my girlfriend and a picture of my father when he was in the Marine Corps," Grady said.

opera singer Renata Scotto is 56; actor James Farentino is 53; actor Barry Bostwick is 46.

ALSO OF NOTE . . .

■ **Right job, wrong guy:** "We all look alike." — NBC News anchor Tom Brokaw, to a U.S. soldier in Saudi Arabia who shook his hand and asked, "You're Peter Jennings, right?"

—FROM WIRE REPORTS

CORRECTIONS & CLARIFICATIONS

■ Biloxi's Third Annual Arbor Day 5K Run and 1-Mile Health Run/Walk were both held Saturday, and there is no run today. A story on Page C-2 of Saturday's Sun Herald erroneously stated that another run would be today.

■ **If you find a mistake of fact in The Sun Herald that is serious enough to warrant a correction or clarification, call immediately so we can make it right in the next day's edition. On weekdays, call 896-2390; on weekends, call 896-2340 after 1 p.m.**

FYI: Listings of government meetings and TV news shows, B-1.

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OPINION

HISTORY'S HEADLINES

1 year ago: Magazine publisher Malcolm Forbes died in Far Hills, New Jersey, at age 70. Fifties balladeer Johnnie Ray died in Los Angeles at 63.

5 years ago: The U.S. Supreme Court struck down as unconstitutional an Indianapolis ordinance that allowed women injured by someone who had seen or read pornographic material to sue the maker or seller of that material.

10 years ago: A jury in White Plains, N.Y., found former school headmistress Jean Harris guilty of second-degree murder in the fatal shooting of "Scarsdale Diet" author Dr. Herman Tarnower. Buckingham Palace announced the engagement of Britain's Prince Charles to Lady Diana Spencer.

WORLD WAR II

FIFTY YEARS AGO TODAY

Feb. 24

1•9•4•1

- Hitler says Germany and Italy are ready to launch a widespread submarine campaign against Allied shipping. British-led African troops fight across the Juba River in Italian Somaliland, forcing the Italians to retreat toward Mogadishu.

Source: "2194 Days of War," W. H. Smith Publishers Inc., The Associated Press

■ **In 1582,** Pope Gregory XIII issued a Papal Bull, or edict, in which he outlined his calendar reforms. (The Gregorian Calendar, as it became known, is the calendar in general use today.)

■ **In 1803,** in its "Marbury versus Madison" decision, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that it was the final interpreter of constitutional issues.

■ **In 1821,** Mexico declared its independence from Spain as the

Terrorism only wounds; it can never heal

BOB McHUGH

The Sun Herald

The Irish Republican Army recently enhanced its reputation for stupidity and cruelty by firing mortar shells at No. 10 Downing Street where British Prime Minister John Major lives and works. One shell landed within 50 feet of Major, but neither he nor any staff members were hurt.

Commuters and tourists at London's crowded Victoria Station were not so fortunate. One man died and dozens of people were injured when a bomb exploded during the morning rush hour last week.

The attacks came at a time when the world was under tightened security because of threats from Iraqi-linked terrorists. If the IRA didn't belong there before, the attacks have put it squarely in the same camp with Saddam Hussein. One terrorist is as bad as another.

This is unfortunate because the Irish have good reason to dislike the British, whose armed presence in the northern counties is odious to all except Protestant Ulstermen. The thing is, there ought to be better ways to express that hostility.

It might be instructive as St. Patrick's Day approaches to review the history of Irish grievances. What most want is for the British to go home and let the Irish fight among themselves in peace. That's not likely to happen because the Brits have had their noses in Irish affairs ever since Cromwell and his army visited in the mid-1600s and slaughtered as many people as they could.

Cromwell's attempt at genocide diminished the population to a half million souls. Just the memory of that brutality, if indeed it were the only one, would be enough to justify resentment. But there is more.

The best way to subjugate a people is to take away their language and their religion. This the British did to their Irish subjects. The Gaelic language and the Catholic religion were banned by law.

The penal laws, in force from 1695 until 1829, barred Catholics from practicing law or holding public office, from voting and even from purchasing land. Catholics were not allowed to attend school or to have schools of their own. Priest-hunting was considered a sport.

As Edmund Burke said, the penal laws were designed to bring about the "oppression, degradation and impoverishment" of the Irish people. But as the Irish found ways around those laws, the unintended effect was to imbue the character of the people with a blend of courage and cunning and an odd mix of cruelty and compassion.

A story that illustrates the latter is told of two men who had been assigned to assassinate a landowner who had turned out his tenants to starve during one of the famine years. The avengers had stationed themselves along a route the landowner was known to take each day at a specific time.

Hours passed and the Englishman did not appear. One of the would-be assassins turned to the other and remarked, "I do hope nothing has happened to the poor fellow."

In any case, a central theme in Irish life for 300 years has been opposition to British control. The memory of past oppression lingers long.

Never to be forgotten is the role of the British in the potato famine of the 1840s, which killed an estimated one million Irish peasants and sent hundreds of thousands to the New World.

The initial British reaction to mass starvation was an act of Parliament authorizing work schemes so that the starving peasants could earn money to buy food. It didn't work because the act required the landed gentry to support the road-building and construction projects at a profit. There were few, if any, takers of this silly scheme.

Food could be sold from British-controlled supplies in Ireland but not at prices that would undercut private entrepreneurs. The starving Irish had no money to buy food and consequently died, in many cases with sustenance at hand.

There was probably as much stupidity and indifference as cruelty in official Britain's attitude toward the horrors that were occurring in Ireland.

Charles Edward Treveleyan, permanent head of the Treasury and in 1845 actual dictator of Irish relief, illustrated the official position eloquently when he said, "The great evil which we have to contend with is not the physical evil of famine, but with the moral evil of the selfish, perverse and turbulent character of the (Irish) people." The words of a man with a full stomach and an empty head.

Actually, there was no shortage of food in Ireland during the Great Hunger with the exception of potatoes. Grain, livestock, flour and eggs, controlled by British landowners, were being exported. The Brits also enforced a law that banned foreign ships from Irish ports so that no relief food could be shipped to Ireland without the application of a fat British tax.

Several years ago, an Irish opera was performed on the Coast. In it, Kitty O'Shea, portrayed by the lovely Mona Bond, was to have dashed a glass of wine into the face of a British official. A nun from Ireland was asked how she liked the performance. "It was fine," she said, "but I wish the little girl hadn't missed when she threw the wine at the Englishman." The good sister's disappointment was understandable.

The atrocities of the IRA cannot be condoned. Nor can the history of British cruelty be forgotten. The only hope for peace lies in the restoration of civil rights to Catholics in Ulster coupled with an exodus of British troops from the six counties in the North. These events could lead to a united Ireland.

■ Robert P. McHugh, retired, of Gulfport, is the former executive editor and editorial director of The Sun Herald.

LETTERS

Innocent deaths tragic, but unavoidable in war

A short time ago, the United States bombed and destroyed a building in Baghdad which was believed to be an Iraqi command and control center. In the rubble of the building, the bodies of many women and children were found. They had been using the building as a shelter.

Since that time, the Spanish government has protested, some Canadian newspapers have criticized our actions, and even some of our own journalists and television newspaper are questioning our intentions. It is almost as if they believe we would intentionally target women and children.

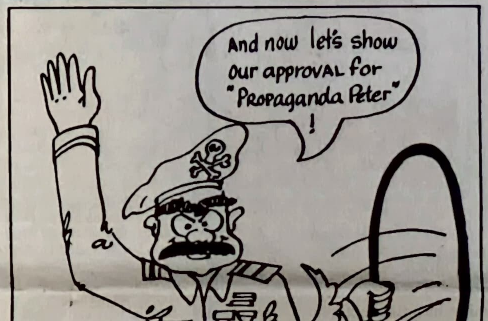
nearly one and a half million to flee the country, and has made Vietnam one of the poorest, most repressive and most militaristic states on the face of the Earth.

Why haven't the anti-war demonstrators, if they really love peace, demonstrated against what the Vietnamese have done in Indochina? Why didn't they demonstrate when Russia went into Afghanistan, or Iraq into Kuwait?

The truth is the radical left that orchestrates the peace movements has always seen itself as part of an international revolutionary army as Mr. Horowitz points out in his article.

Those of you who would follow the peace movement of today

CARTOON TO THE EDITOR



this what he had in mind?

I am in no way minimizing the seriousness of speeding through school zones or anywhere. I consider myself a conscientious and responsible driver. Maybe lucky, too. I won't say I have never exceeded a speed limit, but I do say that I believe I was deliberately led to believe that the 30 mph speed could be resumed in this instance.

What saddens me more than the $67 fine is how my 4-year-old grandson, who was in my car, viewed this event. He looks up to policemen, and we encourage that. The officer didn't acknowledge the presence of this child in any way. A smile and "Hi, Buddy" would have elevated the officer to

the final interpreter of constitutional issues.

■ **In 1821,** Mexico declared its independence from Spain as the Plan of Iguala was published.

■ **In 1863,** Arizona was organized as a territory.

■ **In 1903,** the United States signed an agreement acquiring a naval station at Guantanamo Bay in Cuba.

■ **In 1920,** a fledgling German political party held its first meeting of importance, in Munich. The organization became known as the Nazi Party, and its chief spokesman was Adolf Hitler.

■ **In 1942,** the Voice of America went on the air for the first time.

■ **In 1945,** American soldiers liberated the Philippine capital of Manila from Japanese control during World War II.

■ **In 1980,** The United States hockey team defeated Finland, 4-2, to clinch the gold medal at the Winter Olympic Games in Lake Placid, N.Y.

■ **In 1989,** a state funeral was held in Japan for Emperor Hirohito, who had died the month before at age 87.

■ **In 1989,** a cargo door blew off a United Air Lines Boeing 747-100 flying near Hawaii, drawing nine of the passengers out of the plane to their deaths.

SAIDLINES

"Great events make me quiet and calm; it is only trifles that irritate my nerves." — Queen Victoria, British monarch (1819-1901).

DROP US A LINE

■ The Sun Herald invites letters to the editor from readers on subjects of public interest. Letters that are brief and to the point are preferred; none should be longer than 300 words. Editors reserve the right to edit or reject. Letters must include — for verification purposes — the writer's signature, name, residential address and telephone number. The writer's name and community of residence will be used with all published letters. Mail to:

Letters to the Editor
Associate Editor Marie Harris
The Sun Herald
P.O. Box 4567
Biloxi, MS 39535-4567

tentions. It is almost as if they believe we would intentionally target women and children.

Although I deplore the deaths of innocent women and children, we must remember that Saddam Hussein has repeatedly fired Scud missiles into Israel and Saudi Arabia, deliberately targeting civilian areas in these two countries without any regard for human life. In addition, he has called for terrorist attacks on anything American, without any thought towards who might be killed or injured.

Throughout this entire conflict there has been little to no public outcry about Iraq's actions toward civilians, little protest toward his unacceptable treatment of allied POWs, and very little condemnation of his use of civilians to "shield" his military.

I believe we should tell our critics that if indeed we made a mistake, then that is what it was — a mistake, but sometimes mistakes are made during war and civilians are unavoidably killed. There is no reason to question our entire involvement or our motives based on this one mission. We need to press on and complete our mission — the liberation of Kuwait.

CHARLES W. NANNERY
Ocean Springs

Study the organizers of peace protests

I would like for all the peace protesters, and those who write letters in their support, like Mr. Ray Gebhart, to research the real reasons behind the peace movement.

David Horowitz, a former partisan of similar movements, wrote in his current article in the National Review, "I never in 25 years of political activism marched in a demonstration that did not have primary agendas just beneath its pacifist surface that were militant, Marxist, and anti-American."

The Coalition to Stop U.S. Intervention in the Middle East, (which staged the Jan. 19 march on Washington) is but another attempt by the now-discredited left to jump-start the stalled revolutionary engines.

Let's look back on the "peace movement" of the '60s. The anti-war protesters had their way and the United States left Vietnam to the "hero" Viet Cong. The Communists in Indochina have sponsored genocide that extinguished nearly two million lives and obliterated a national culture. A decade and a half of Communist oppression in Vietnam has killed more than half a million civilians, has caused

article.

Those of you who would follow the peace movement of today would do well to read the book by Mr. Horowitz, "Destructive Generation: Second Thoughts About the Sixties." He tells the real truth behind the peace movements.

G.B. WERBY
Gulfport

Volunteers and Camp have built Scouting

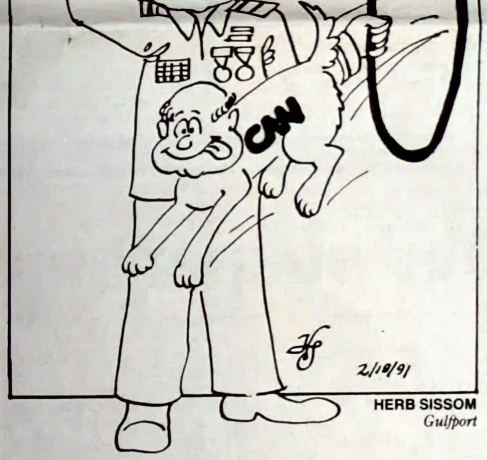
It seems that the Pine Burr Area Council Scout Executive is bent on destroying the Biloxi Bay District of scouting, but local volunteers do not understand why.

Boy Scout troops in the Biloxi Bay District frequently use the excellent facilities at Camp Wilkes in Biloxi. Camp Wilkes is not a Boy Scout camp, nor has it ever claimed to be an official Boy Scouts of America Council Camp. Camp Wilkes is a beautiful place for any organization or group to use at a small fee. The facilities at Camp Wilkes are great.

The scouting program is made up of volunteer men and women who give of their time and energy. Without volunteers, the Boy Scouts of America would not be so great.

I am a Boy Scout volunteer. I am not in favor of the Pine Burr Council Executive trying to destroy the Biloxi Bay District youths nor wonderful Camp Wilkes.

CHEE CHEE STANOVICH
Troop 212/MC
Camp Wilkes, Inc., member
Biloxi



HERB SISSOM
Gulfport

We must stop Saddam the sooner the better

I'm now quite sure many minds are very mixed up as to why we are in the Persian Gulf. Yes, it is partly because of oil but mostly because of what that madman Saddam Hussein could and would do if he had a nuclear bomb. He could hold the entire world in his hands with terrorist threats and would raise oil prices up to $100 per barrel. Any man who would use poison gas on his own people . . . who would personally shoot generals because he did not like to hear bad news . . . think what his potential for evil is! Stop him now and lose 4,000 or even 40,000 — or wait a year or two and lose 40 million or more people. Stop and think it over before you speak out too loud.

DR. ELMER HALLEN
World War II veteran
Gulfport

Police methods fail to earn respect

Last month I was given a speeding ticket for driving 30 mph in a school zone at the intersection of Rodenberg Avenue and Vine Street in Biloxi. This particular school zone has signs, but does not have designated hours posted, nor flashing lights. Sometimes a school guard is present, sometimes not. I have lived in this area for 16 years.

I noticed as I approached the intersection that the orange cone that is usually placed in the middle of Rodenberg during designated school hours was lying against the curb. Standing near the cone was a person, whom I assumed to be an officer or school guard. It was then that I noticed the patrol car parked on Vine Street and the blue lights were suddenly turned on.

I hesitate to use the word "trap," but I do feel that it was a deliberate act of deception.

Would that our city expend this much energy and personnel in fighting drugs, illegal gambling, child abuse and drunken driving. Our mayor was quite outspoken in his outrage at recent raids on illegal gambling in our city. I believe he also said our police should be utilized for more serious crimes. Is edge the presence of this child in any way. A smile and "Hi, Buddy" would have elevated the officer to a position just a tad below his favorite Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle, and that's about as high as any of us can get in a 4-year-old's world.

Respect for authority figures cannot be taught, it must be earned. Neither deception nor intimidation is one of the ways.

HELEN MARINE
Biloxi

Quicker end to war would save U.S. lives

I say, let's get this war over with. You can't reason with a madman like Saddam Hussein — or his people. We're sending our young men and women to a fight that Bush says Saddam can't win.

Drop the bomb on him and his fanatical people and let our boys and girls come home.

I am a WWII veteran and it was a great day for me when the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It saved thousands of lives on both sides. I was on Corregidor at the time and was scheduled to be on the invasion of Japan.

I say, kill the B!

M.M. MADDUX JR.
Waveland

Salute to our American soldiers

We adore thee
with hearts that are true,
We support you
and that's for sure.
We admire you
for the jobs you do.
You are loyal
to the red, white, and blue.
Soldiers like you —
there are none.
American soldiers
are number one.
Prayers we send
to God we trust,
That victory will come
to all of us.

QUINSOLA ELLIOTT
Ocean Springs

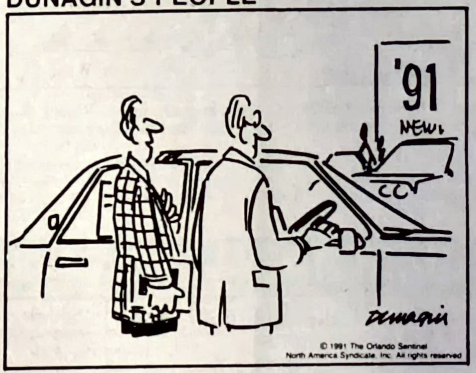
Let protesters enjoy new life in Baghdad

Is it not true that the anti-war protesters are giving aid and comfort to Saddam Hussein and his Iraqi cutthroats in Baghdad?

I think that they should be charged and tried and, if convicted, should be stripped of their American citizenship and deported to Baghdad the same day they are convicted.

BRYAN THOMAS
Gulfport

DUNAGIN'S PEOPLE



"YES, SIR! WITH THIS BABY, YOU CAN BE ASSURED OF USING YOUR FULL SHARE OF THE REMAINING ENERGY RESERVES."

WEATHER

THE FIVE-DAY FORECAST

TODAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY
68/44	67/55	48/37	54/38	65/44
CLOUDY	RAINY	MOSTLY SUNNY	MOSTLY SUNNY	CHANCE RAIN

COAST TODAY

Skies: Increasing cloudiness
Chance of rain: Less than 20 percent
Highs: Near 70 **Lows:** Mid-40s
Winds: Light southwest

COAST YESTERDAY

	High	Low	Rain
Biloxi	62	51	0.0
Gulfport	64	49	0.0

Records at Keesler AFB

High	76 in 1949
Low	28 in 1964
Rain	1.07 in 1963

SUN	MOON
Rise 6:28 a.m.	Rise 1:38 p.m.
Set 5:51 p.m.	Set 3:15 a.m.

March 23 Feb. 28 March 8 March 16

First Full Last New

RIVER STAGES

	Flood Stage	Current Stage	24-hour change
Pascagoula River			
Hattiesburg	22	21.3	+1.7
Waynesboro	35	19.4	+3.2
Merrill	22	26.4	+2.8
Pearl River			
Columbia	17	18	+1.3

TIDES

Tides are for Biloxi Bay. For other points listed, add or subtract times as shown.

Date	Time	High	Time	Low
Sat 2-23	5:41p	2.0	4:22a	-1.0
Sun 2-24	6:46p	1.9	5:22a	-1.0
Mon 2-25	7:52p	1.8	6:20a	-0.9
Tue 2-26	8:58p	1.6	7:07a	-0.6
Wed 2-27	10:01p	1.3	7:49a	-0.3
Thu 2-28	11:16p	1.0	8:11a	0.0
Fri 3-01	11:46a	0.4	7:50a	0.3
			5:25p	0.3
Sat 3-02	12:53a	0.7	6:12a	0.5
	11:34a	0.7	8:10p	0.1
Sun 3-03	11:56a	1.0	10:16p	0.0
Mon 3-04	12:35p	1.2	11:46p	-0.2

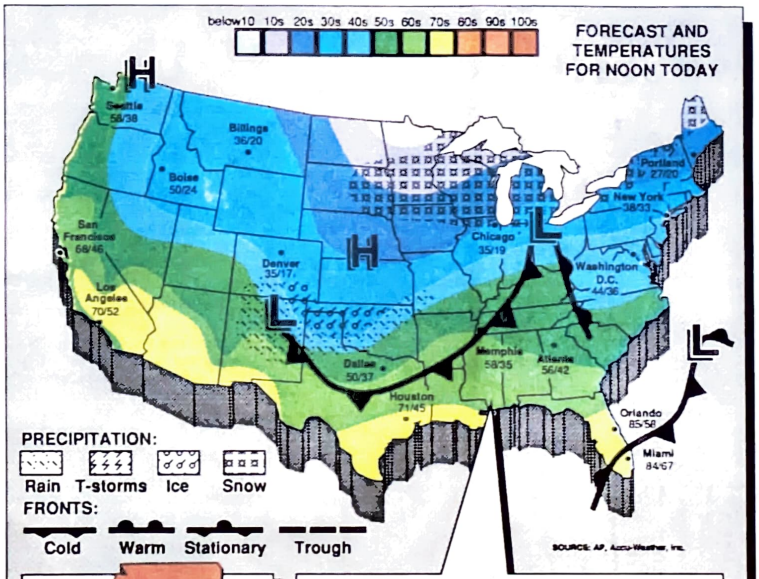
Location	High	Low
Bayou LaBatre	-00:45	-00:44
Horn Island Pass	+00:01	-00:33
Pascagoula Sound	-00:08	-00:25
Pascagoula River Entrance	+00:32	-00:22
Ship Island Pass	-00:10	-00:10
Cat Island	-00:12	+00:27
Bay St. Louis	+01:25	+01:46
Chandeleur Light	-00:07	-00:01
Southwest Pass	-02:02	-02:11

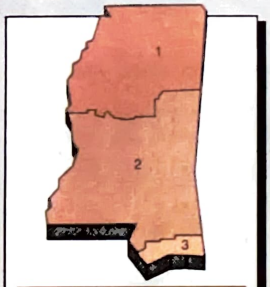
NATIONAL SUMMARY

Snow fell and cold conditions prevailed in the upper Midwest on Saturday while the sun shone across the northern Atlantic Coast region.

Snowfall totals in Minnesota ranged up to 7 inches and in northern Wisconsin up to 5 inches.

Parts of Interstate 94 near Fergus Falls, Minn., were temporarily closed Saturday after accidents stemming from the storm that swept much of the state. Only minor injuries were reported from

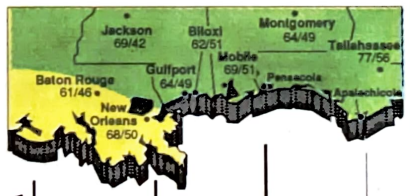




■ **Today:** Cloudy. High near 60.
■ **Tonight:** Cloudy. Low in 30s.
■ **Tomorrow:** Chance of rain and sleet. High in 40s.

■ **Today:** Cloudy. High in 60s.
■ **Tonight:** Cloudy. Low in 40s.
■ **Tomorrow:** Chance of rain. High in 50s.

REGIONAL AND MARINE FORECAST WITH YESTERDAY'S RECORDED TEMPERATURES



Pensacola to Mississippi River
• **Winds:** Northwest near 10 knots
• **Seas:** 2 to 3 feet, smooth to a light chop in protected waters

Mississippi River to Intracoastal City
• **Winds:** East 10 to 15 knots
• **Seas:** 2 to 4 feet, a light chop in protected waters

Apalachicola to Pensacola
• **Winds:** Northeast to east 10 to 15 knots
• **Seas:** 2 to 4 feet, a light chop in protected waters

Intracoastal City to Port Arthur
• **Winds:** Southeast winds near 10 knots

NATIONAL REPORT

	Hi	Lo	Prc	Otlk
Albany,N.Y.	53	10		cdy
Albuquerque	66	39		cdy
Amarillo	65	41		cdy
Anchorage	12	11		cdy
Asheville	55	42	.08	cdy
Atlanta	59	52	.91	cdy
Atlantic City	68	30		cdy
Austin	71	43		cdy
Baltimore	69	34		cdy
Billings	45	29		cdy
Birmingham	59	45	.84	cdy
Bismarck	28	12	.05	cdy
Boise	59	33		clr
Boston	62	17		sn
Brownsville	78	49		cdy
Buffalo	46	12	.01	cdy
Burlington,Vt.	48	04	.03	cdy
Casper	53	25	.01	cdy
Charleston,S.C.	75	60	.11	cdy
Charleston,W.V.	63	31		cdy
Charlotte,N.C.	62	48	.08	cdy
Cheyenne	56	28		cdy
Chicago	44	20		cdy
Cincinnati	50	26		cdy
Cleveland	49	21		cdy
Columbia,S.C.	69	53	1.02	cdy
Columbus,Ohio	48	22		cdy
Concord,N.H.	54	08		cdy
Dallas Ft Worth	68	42		cdy
Dayton	46	21		cdy
Denver	64	30		cdy
Des Moines	39	26		clr
Detroit	44	15	.03	cdy
Duluth	22	-06		cdy
El Paso	71	47		cdy
Evansville	47	30		cdy
Fairbanks	04	-02		cdy
Fargo	14	-09	.12	cdy
Flagstaff	60	27		cdy
Grand Rapids	45	13		cdy
Great Falls	55	19	.01	cdy
Greensboro,N.C.	63	47		cdy
Hartford	62	18		cdy
Helena	55	19	.02	cdy
Honolulu	81	66		mis
Houston	59	39		cdy
Indianapolis	45	23		cdy
Jackson,Miss.	69	42	.10	cdy
Jacksonville	82	67	.02	cdy
Juneau	38	36	.14	rn
Kansas City	49	28		cdy
Las Vegas	69	47		clr
Little Rock	51	33	.66	cdy
Los Angeles	71	54		clr
Louisville	57	28		cdy
Lubbock	71	44		cdy
Memphis	54	35	.01	cdy
Miami Beach	86	69		cdy
Midland-Odessa	73	42		cdy
Milwaukee	42	20		rn
Mpls-St Paul	33	15		cdy
Nashville	63	34		cdy
New Orleans	68	50		cdy
New York City	66	27		cdy
Norfolk,Va.	69	42		cdy
North Platte	52	30		cdy
Oklahoma City	67	36		cdy
Omaha	43	28		cdy
Orlando	86	68		cdy
Philadelphia	66	30		cdy
Phoenix	85	58		cdy
Pittsburgh	49	19		cdy
Portland,Maine	56	11		cdy
Portland,Ore	57	35		clr
Providence	65	22		sn
Raleigh-Durham	66	44		cdy
Rapid City	37	26		cdy
Reno	63	25		clr
Richmond	71	40		cdy
Sacramento	64	41		clr
St Louis	53	29		cdy
Salt Lake City	61	30		clr
San Antonio	74	42		cdy
San Diego	64	55		cdy
San Francisco	61	47		clr
San Juan,P.R.	86	70	.02	cdy
Santa Fe	52	m		cdy
St Ste Marie	32	-08		sn
Seattle	51	36		clr
Shreveport	52	38	.02	cdy
Sioux Falls	37	25		cdy
Spokane	50	28		clr
Syracuse	48	08	.01	cdy
Tampa-St Pt	82	69		cdy
Topeka	51	30		cdy
Tucson	85	52		cdy
Tulsa	62	36		cdy
Washington,D.C.	72	35		cdy
Wichita	59	36		cdy
Wilkes-Barre	54	16		cdy
Wilmington,Del.	66	30		cdy

National Temperature Extremes
High Friday: 90 at Clewiston, Fla.
Low Saturday: 14 at International Falls, Minn.

mis — Indicates missing sky condition.

m — Indicates missing information.

Man killed in Wiggins hit-and-run

By KEN FINK
STAFF WRITER

■ A Wiggins man was hit and killed while walking along Mississippi Highway 26 in Wiggins early Saturday, and police are looking for a tractor trailer rig or a log truck that they think was involved in the accident.

Bill Atkinson, age unknown, was walking in the center of the eastbound lane of traffic between 12:30 and 1 a.m. when he was struck and killed by a large truck, according to Wiggins Police Chief Joel Simpson.

"There were some skid marks, a double set," Simpson said. "It looked like one (double) set of wheels. Apparently, whoever it was didn't make too much of an effort to slow down."

Simpson said the department received a call about 1 a.m. from someone saying there was a man lying in the road. Atkinson was dead when authorities arrived, Simpson said. He was last seen about 12:30, and no vehicles were around when he was found.

Simpson asks that anyone who traveled Mississippi 26 East near the Stone County Hospital between 12:30 and 1 a.m. who may have seen Atkinson, or a truck, call the Wiggins Police Department.

"Our concern is that the operator left the scene of the accident," Simpson said. "We will file a John Doe affidavit in the morning for leaving the scene of the accident."

Atkinson, an unemployed mechanic, was the sixth traffic fatality on the Coast this year. Last year at this time, 10 traffic deaths had been reported in Hancock, Harrison, Jackson and Stone counties.

U.S. troops anxious to get rid of Saddam

By ELIZABETH NEUFFER
BOSTON GLOBE

■ IN EASTERN SAUDI ARABIA — Ken Wakefield had barely slung his duffel bag on the concrete floor of the airplane hangar when the news came. President Bush's deadline for Iraq to

sin up to 5 inches.

Parts of Interstate 94 near Fergus Falls, Minn., were temporarily closed Saturday after accidents stemming from the storm that swept much of the state. Only minor injuries were reported from the accidents.

Brisk northerly winds accompanied the snow north of a stationary front curving through the northern Plains into the upper Mississippi Valley, and temperatures were in the teens and single digits. Grand Forks, N.D., reported a wind chill of 20 degrees below zero.

■ Tomorrow: Chance of rain. High in 50s.

■ Today: Cloudy. High near 70.
■ Tonight: Cloudy. Low in mid-40s.
■ Tomorrow: Cloudy. High in mid-60s.

• Seas: 2 to 4 feet, a light chop in protected waters

Intracoastal City to Port Arthur
• Winds: Southeast winds near 10 knots
• Seas: 2 to 3 feet, smooth in protected waters

• Seas: 2 to 4 feet, a light chop in protected waters

■ Weather data provided by The Associated Press and the National Weather Service. Tides data provided by Sea Grant Advisory Service, Biloxi.

Falls, Minn.
mis — Indicates missing sky condition
m — indicates missing information.

WORLD REPORT

Bermuda	73	64 cdy
Frankfurt	46	27 cdy
Hong Kong	66	57 clr
London	54	48 cdy
Madrid	63	48 clr
Paris	55	48 cdy
Rome	61	37 clr

Coastians' suspense ends

Tension-filled day climaxes with news of allied ground war

By TAMMIE CESSNA LANGFORD
STAFF WRITER

■ Coast families stayed tuned to their televisions Saturday and waited for the ground war in the Persian Gulf to break out. It did, shortly before 8 p.m. Saturday.

"I'm just totally in fear right now," said Dick Belvel, who has a son fighting in the war. "I know where he is, and he's right dead ahead of what's about to happen."

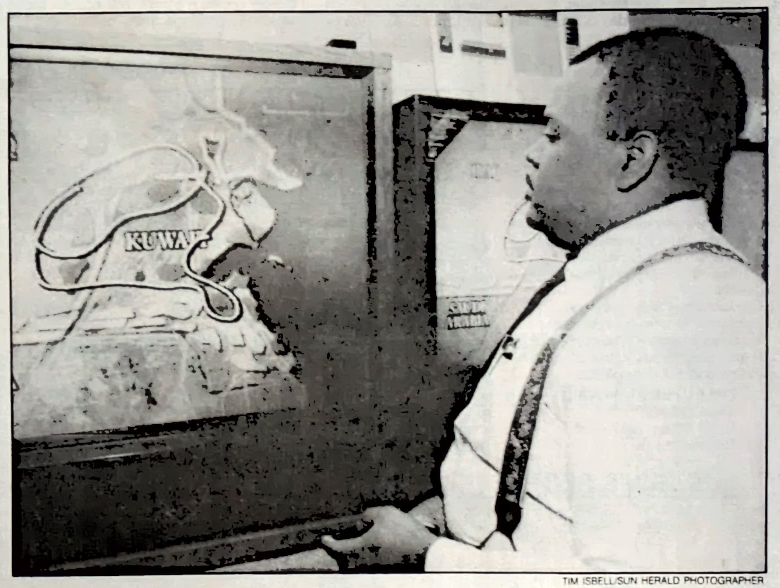
For the many Americans like Belvel who have loved ones in the war against Iraq, it was a day of waiting.

Saturday morning cartoons and other programs were interrupted as television broadcasters made their ways into United States living rooms to inform viewers that the deadline for Saddam Hussein's withdrawal from Kuwait was imminent. Saddam had been given until 11 a.m. CST to begin removing his army. He did not comply.

Americans stayed tuned throughout the day, expecting the ground war to start, but not knowing when or if it would happen.

"I've been watching and waiting all day," said Diane Seymour of Biloxi, who has a son on the front lines in the Persian Gulf War. "I'm scared. But I guess we'll never get these boys home if we don't start up."

The Belvel and Seymour families belong to the Desert Storm Support Group, which meets at 6 p.m. every Wednesday at Biloxi City Hall. The support group plans to meet at 6 p.m. today at the Seymours' home. Their telephone number is 392-2241.



TIM ISBELL/SUN HERALD PHOTOGRAPHER

Vince Williams, manager at Rex Television & Appliance Center in Gulfport, studies a map of Kuwait, Iraq and Saudi Arabia as TV news broadcasts the start of ground battles in the Gulf War Saturday night.

Poll: Most people favor ground war

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

■ NEW YORK — A poll on the eve of Saturday's deadline for Iraq showed about three out of five Americans supported a ground war to humiliate Saddam Hussein and reduce his ability to cause future trouble, Newsweek reported.

The alternative of letting Saddam save face to avoid a bloody ground war appealed to 30 percent, compared with 62 percent who favored humiliating Saddam.

The Gallup Organization interviewed a national sample of 768 adults by phone Friday for the poll, the magazine said. The margin of sampling error was 4 percentage points either way.

Surveys on foreign policy also are subject to substantial effects from question wording. When Newsweek posed three options for the allies if Iraq ignored the noon deadline, only 29 percent supported launching a ground war immediately.

Forty-two percent said the allies should continue the air war but keep working with the Soviets and others to arrange an Iraqi withdrawal; 24 percent said the allies should ignore more diplomatic efforts.

Studies of public opinion in the Korean and Vietnam wars show approval was high at first and declined in relation to casualties suffered.

Ken Wakefield had barely slung his duffel bag on the concrete floor of the airplane hangar when the news came. President Bush's deadline for Iraq to withdraw its forces had come and gone.

Fresh in from the United States, the 25-year-old from Bryant Pond, Maine, found his heart racing as fast as on the day he made his first jump as a paratrooper.

"Scared to death and excited," said Wakefield, 25, just hours before the ground assault began. "I feel excited because we're going to do what we had to get done. Get Saddam Hussein out of power. And if we don't, we'll be sitting on these cots two years from now."

There were no fireworks when the deadline for Iraq's withdrawal came at 8 p.m. Saudi time, no handshakes or backslapping, no smiles, no hurrahs. Instead, soldiers greeted the news that the ground war appeared inevitable with a kind of grim excitement, anxious to oust Saddam Hussein from Kuwait but scared to die.

Their adrenaline, they said, was pumping after days that had seen the diplomatic pendulum swing from peace to war to peace and finally back to war again. Now, they said, they knew what they had to do: fight.

"It's a big relief," said Staff Sgt. Steven L. Parker of the 3rd Armored Division. "I feel great. I feel good about getting out there. Right now, it feels right. That idiot has to go."

Parker, 32, has never seen combat, much to his regret. Saturday night, he felt the thrill of imminent battle. "If I see Saddam Hussein, I'll give him a little shave," said Parker with a laugh. "And it will be his last one."

Marine Sgt. Ronnie Ross, en route home because of a death in the family, found himself upset and angry that he had to leave his unit just as the moment of battle had arrived.

"I'd rather stay here. I feel like I am leaving my people in a bad light," said the 27-year-old from Conway, Ark., shaking his head with frustration. "I feel like if war's going to go on, I'd rather be here."

But there were also those who expressed sadness and regret that diplomacy had failed.

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